

Distinguished members of the Transportation Committee of the CT General Assembly,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 6343 and S.B. 495, acts concerning the restoration of the Housatonic rail line in northwest CT, including extending passenger rail service to points north of Danbury.

My name is Rich Luszcak. I am a resident of New Milford emailing to ask for your consideration in the restoration of the commuter rail extension to the northwest corridor of Connecticut.

The upgrade and extension of the commuter rail infrastructure, including the implementation of the highest safety standards, is key to smart, sustainable, pro-business growth in areas such as northwest CT.

Extending passenger rail service would have an immediate benefit by providing a mode of alternative transportation for commuters traveling to Fairfield County and the extension would also attract new businesses to points north of Danbury.

Extending passenger service to the existing rail line would also foster positive economic growth by driving weekend tourism and potentially attracting new businesses to the area.(perhaps tech companies like Apple or Tesla). This would create jobs.

An example for a comparison study would be the recently completed Minneapolis "green line" light rail system connecting downtown Minneapolis with St. Paul - an innovative approach that is driving economic development and creating jobs with an influx of new businesses and green energy projects along the rail lines, including electric bike-share stations throughout the corridor. (ref./CNN money article "Connecting neighborhoods with light rail-How the twin cities got transit right").

The Twin Cities model, albeit on a smaller scale, could be replicated with success in CT-driving economic growth, connecting communities and creating jobs in the northwest corridor of Connecticut.

Having access to a commuter rail line would be highly beneficial to New Milford and the entire region. Please support investment in the northwest corridor's rail infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rich Luszcak/46 Beard Drive, New Milford, CT 06776

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